

(323) 881-2401

April 29, 2003

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR
FROM: P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

TERRORISM PREPAREDNESS

This is to apprise your Honorable Board of the steps the Fire Department has taken in preparation for response to potential incidents caused by terrorist activities.

The Department has dedicated full-time staff to preparing personnel for terrorist-related incidents, including an assistant fire chief, a battalion chief and a fire captain. The Deputy Chief of Special Operations oversees anti-terrorism program development.

Fire Department staff participates in local preparedness and response efforts, including:

- Terrorism Early Warning Group
- Terrorism Working Group
- Metropolitan Medical Response System
- Hospital Terrorism Planning Preparedness

On a national level, Fire Department staff participates in:

- Homeland Security Advisory Council Senior Advisory Committee on Emergency Services, Law Enforcement, Public Health and Hospitals (Chief Freeman)
- Chair of International Fire Chiefs Association Terrorism Committee (Chief Freeman)
- National Fire Academy
- United States Fire Administration
- Inter-Agency Board (IAB) for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability
- National Medical Response Team (NMRT)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Task Force (specific to weapons of mass destruction [WMD])
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) - California Task Force 2 International USAR
- PSWN Executive Committee (Public Safety Wireless Network) - Interoperable Public Safety Communications

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Fire Department first responders and chief officers have received specialized training for responses to mass casualty-mass decontamination (MCMD), weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and hazardous materials incidents. A seamless multi-agency response to a terrorism event is critical, and the Fire Department continues to lead in the development of several large multi-agency training exercises in the procedural aspects of response to a WMD incident. Several exercises were conducted in Inglewood and Pomona within the last year.

The Department has designated a Metropolitan Incident Response Vehicle (MIRV) for each of three regional areas in Los Angeles County. The vehicles are equipped with decontamination tents and other items utilized for managing a mass decontamination effort. The North MIRV will be stationed at Fire Station 135 in the City of Lancaster, the Central MIRV will be stationed at Fire Station 171 in the City of Inglewood, and the East MIRV will be stationed at Fire Station 87 in the City of Industry. This re-distribution enhances coverage and allows us to provide an improved response using a regional model rather than a centralized approach. The Department has also provided first responders with personal protective equipment (PPE) and decontamination equipment to facilitate the rapid decontamination of victims in preparation for treatment and transport to local hospitals.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center, town hall meetings were organized to provide local residents with timely emergency preparedness information. Our public information officers (PIOs) and community services representatives (CSRs) continue to regularly interface with Los Angeles County residents through the media and various outreach programs.

Although preparedness is at an all-time high, continued vigilance is needed; the Fire Department's first responders, as well as command staff, are prepared to assess and mitigate terrorist incidents and provide safety services to the residents we serve.

Should you have any questions please contact me at (323) 881-2401.

PMF:MFM:fc

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